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To clean Alabaster Sculptures.

Spots of grease are first to be removed with spirits of turpentine ; the article is then immersed in water, where it is suffered to remain about ten minutes, or, perhaps, a little longer, if the thing be very dirty ; it is then rubbed over with a painter's brush, suffered to dry, and then treated with plaster of Paris as above, when the article will be found perfectly clean, as if just from the hands of the sculptor.

A piece of sculpture that would take several days to clean by the usual way, with fish skin and Dutch rushes, is, by this process, completed in half an hour.

No. VI.

BRITISH OPIUM.

THE Society have for some years offered premiums to encourage the cultivation of the white poppy in this country, for the purpose of obtaining opium from it. The communications received on this subject from Mr. Young, of Edinburgh, from Mr. Jeston, and from Messrs. Cowley and Staines, are inserted in the 37th, 38th, 41st, and 42d volumes of the Transactions. From these it appears, that in common seasons, and by proper management, the produce per acre of opium is such as to yield a fair return of profit to the grower. The opinions of professional men have also been published, showing that British opium, in its medicinal properties, is at least as

efficacious as the best in the market, namely, that from Turkey. It still remained, however, a desideratum, to ascertain, by a careful comparative experiment, the relative proportions, in British and foreign opium, of that vegetable principle called morphia, to which the effects of this drug on the human constitution are owing.

Mr. H. Hennell, a member of the Society, and chemical operator at Apothecaries' Hall, where the extraction of morphia from opium forms part of the regular business of that great establishment, was requested to undertake this examination. Opium prepared by Messrs. Cowley and Staines was furnished by the Society for this purpose, and the result was, that 700 grains of dried Turkey opium yielded 48 grains of morphia, and an equal quantity of dried English opium, yielded 53 grains of morphia.

The process pursued with each was, to infuse the opium in dilute acetic acid, and then to decompose the acetic solution by ammonia: the precipitate thus obtained was digested in hot alcohol, and the morphia was obtained therefrom by crystallization.